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ABSTRACT

Leadership development is essential to the future of the student services profession and to student services. Opportunities for professional development can be a key factor in enhanced leadership, creativity, and growth. The lack of funding and administrative support for professional development is a major concern to the community of student personnel professionals. At Wayne State University steps have been taken to fund participation in professional activities off campus and to provide learning opportunities for professional development on campus. Wayne State University has aggressively encouraged its professional staff to improve their leadership skills and to participate in professional associations, workshops, and conferences, and to develop a stronger peer support system on campus. An evaluative survey was administered to all individuals eligible to participate in this universitywide program. Preliminary analysis indicated greater job satisfaction, expanded leadership roles, increased productivity, and an enhanced sense of professional identity. As an indirect result, services to students have been expanded and modified during the course of the program. The university and the students it serves can only benefit by promoting, supporting, and, in fact, requiring professional development among student development professionals. It is time that professional development becomes an integral part of the workings of the university's student personnel community. (ABL)

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DEVELOPING LEADERSHIP SKILLS: A PROGRAM MODEL AND ITS IMPACT

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PROGRAM AGENDA

DEVELOPING LEADERSHIP SKILLS: A PROGRAM MODEL AND ITS IMPACT

I. Theoretical/Practical Rationale for Professional Development

II. Program Model: Academic Staff Professional Development at Wayne State University

- A. Wayne State and its Academic Staff
- B. Professional Development
  1. Perceived Need
  2. Model Structure

III. Professional Development Series

- A. Travel Match Grant Program
- B. Program Series
- C. Specialized Department Funding
- D. Recognition Awards

IV. Evaluative Study

- A. Impact upon Student Services Professionals
- B. Impact upon Services to Students

V. Future Directions

VI. Discussion

Overview of
Developing Leadership Skills: A Program Model and its Impact

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Leadership development is essential to the future of our profession and to student services. A comprehensive program, spanning over four years, will be discussed in detail. A review of the conceptual framework for such innovative programming; the characteristics of the student body and mission of the institution; and the positive measurable impact on services provided to a diverse urban student population and the perceived leadership capabilities of its participants will be the foci of this program.

Several important factors are necessary for professionals to remain challenged, revitalized, and satisfied with their career choices. Opportunities for professional development can be a key factor in enhanced leadership, creativity, and growth. Individuals who regard professional development as an important part of that process often find new challenges and leadership roles within their careers. New professionals are also more likely to develop professional identities if they are exposed to ongoing professional development programs and are also given the opportunity to network with senior colleagues in such settings. In turn, administrators can look forward to a staff member who has augmented his/her educational background and has improved job performance through involvement in professional development. Indeed, such individuals are likely to emerge as student personnel leaders with a strong commitment to the ongoing professional development of **their** staff.

The lack of funding and administrative support for professional development is a major concern to the community of student personnel professionals. At Wayne State University, student personnel professionals have taken the lead in addressing this

issue and have seen their institution take a number of positive steps in the promotion of professional and leadership development throughout the institution. Such steps involve funding for participation in professional activities off campus and providing learning opportunities for professional development on campus.

It is essential that staff be afforded both the climate of approval and the time to engage in both professional development and in research. Campus-wide, Wayne State University has aggressively encouraged its professional staff to improve their leadership skills and to participate in professional associations, workshops, conferences, and to develop a stronger peer support system on campus. This unique opportunity empowers student personnel workers to develop leadership roles within the institution and their profession.

An evaluative survey was administered to all individuals eligible to participate in this university-wide program. Preliminary analysis indicates greater job satisfaction, expanded leadership roles, increased productivity, and an enhanced sense of professional identity. Indirectly, services to students have been expanded and modified during the course of the program. These modifications seem to have developed in response to a greater awareness of the diversity of student needs and strategies to meet them effectively.

The professional development program at Wayne State University consists of several components. One aspect of this program makes funds available to encourage student personnel workers to actively participate in national, regional, and local conventions, conferences, and seminars. Another segment of the overall design has brought nationally recognized experts to campus to address relevant issues. In addition, funding has been made available for programs which address the issues unique to specialized departments. The program also provides for formal recognition of outstanding achievement by student

personnel workers. Stronger personal and professional links with peers and administrators have also developed.

The university and the students it serves can only benefit by promoting, supporting, and, in fact, requiring professional development among student development professionals. It is time that professional development becomes an integral part of the workings of the university's student personnel community. As part of our administrative leadership, it is imperative that we facilitate professional development. Such programs are wise investments which can only lead to the development of student services professionals who lead and act--rather than follow and react.

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Professional Development Programs: Getting Started

Step I. Commitment to professional development

Step II. Organizational structure
- Committee members representing diverse roles
- Senior administrator
- Support staff
- Human resources liaison

Step III. Set goals

Step IV. Survey of professional interests and needs
- include: preferred format, times, days, and volunteer request

Step V. Develop program format
- Professional presentation series
- Travel grants

Step VI. Develop uniform materials
- Include: Letter to administrators, program evaluations, announcements, booklets, travel fund application

Step VII. Establish ad hoc committees

Step VIII. Evaluate and revise programs and materials

Step IX. Accountability: Prepare annual report for top administrator

Helpful Tips for Getting Started

-- Stagger committee terms
-- Develop uniform program materials
-- Develop standard procedure to implement programs
-- Involve as many colleagues as possible
-- Involve top administrators and middle management
-- Vary program format
-- Allow for informal interaction as part of programs
-- Develop a "theme" for the programs
-- Assign one individual to do all publications
-- Be open and creative
-- Document the success of the program
-- Be open and creative
-- Have fun!!

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